

THE ABENG National Weekly

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SIGNPOST

THE RT. HON. P.C.

AFTER SPEAKING strongly against British Honours in the Jamaican Parliament a few months ago, Mr. Shearer is now found guilty, of saying one thing and doing another.

The Prime Minister has accepted an invitation by Queen Elizabeth of England to be a member of her "Privy Council". He has, therefore, accepted a British Honour after our Parliament rightly discarded the colonial British honours system a few months ago.



The Queen has given Mr. Shearer the right to be entitled "The Right Honourable" and to use the initials "P.C." after his name. Any title which is not earned by some deliberate effort on the part of the individual

[contd. on page 4]

WHY ABENG

We are a very distinctive people with a very distinctive history. But we know very little of our own past and of the struggles of our forefathers who survived the horrors of slavery and managed to build what little we have today. The task of this newspaper is to help us discover ourselves - not just the past, but also what we are today and what we can be tomorrow if we can move forward together.

In keeping with this aim, we had to seek a name which would most appropriately convey our intention and purpose. The paper is to be an instrument for Jamaicans to communicate with one another. The Abeng was used by the Maroons and other Jamaicans in bygone days to communicate with one another in a very precise and special way - in much the same way that this paper would like to do.

The Abeng "is made of eight or nine inches of the small horn of a cow - sufficient of the tip is taken off to leave a hole the size of a pea. On the concave side of the horn and close to the smaller end, an oblong opening or mouth hole is made ... about a quarter of an inch wide about an inch long ... The lips are placed to the oblong opening and the thumb covers the hole in the tip the opening and closing of which gives a variation about a tone... The Maroons have regular code of signals for the Abeng which is never divulged to any but their own people.

According to Dallas in his 1803 History of the Maroons, "it is very remarkable that the Maroons had a particular call upon the horn for each individual, by which he was summoned from a distance, as easily as he would have been spoken to by name, had he been near. It appears wonderful at first that a single horn should be able to express such a number of names ... Allowing that the horn admits a less variation of tones than the chimes of twelve bells, it has a greater advantage in one respect - for conveying of particular ideas being capable of varying the duration of sound ... as to transmit a great variety of ideas."

What more appropriate name could we find?

The intention is that this newspaper will have "a particular call" for each and every Jamaican. We hope that each and every Jamaican will answer the summons. The newspaper, by helping the society to examine itself for what it is, will "convey particular ideas" about the state of the society - what is wrong with it and why. And in seeking possibilities for change, the newspaper will invite the views of everyone; thereby it will "transmit a great variety of ideas."

In short this newspaper is to be an instrument similar in function to what we are told the Abeng was to the Maroons.

So now we know why "ABENG."

UWI CLOSES CAMPUS GATES TO CHILDREN

For the past week or so, the University of the West Indies has closed its Garden Boulevard pedestrian entrance at 3.00 p.m. every day. The reason - to prevent children from nearby Mona Primary School walking through the campus.

Small children, on their way home to Hermitage, August

Town, Elletson Flats, etc., are now forced to walk the hazardous way, which is the traffic-congested Mona - Hermitage Road, instead of the tranquil and scenic campus.

All because the children pick and eat coolie plums from trees on the Campus. The ABENG Reporter understands that the trees are not near to any of the University class rooms, and that these children have never been known to disturb classes or any

other U.W.I. business.

It is a scandal that there are people in this society who would prefer to see "coolie" plums rot on the ground rather than to have infants eat them.

ABENG calls on the attorneys at the Mona Plantation to give the little ones a chance to share the fruits of the provision ground.

Many of the same attorneys, as children used to kill the mangoes at Hope Bush.

GOVT. TO MASH UP NEW SCHOOL

A £4,000 basic school in West Kingston is going to be knocked down because it does not fit in with the Government's "Development plans" for the area.

The school is now being built on Ebenezer Church land by Operation Friendship, an inter-denominational venture which has provided almost the only educational, medical and vocational services the area has had over the past eight years.

On Tuesday, January 28, the Government Ministers Wilton Hill and Edward Seaga, accompanied by a crowd of followers, visited the site and told Revs. Didier, Cadogan and Grenier that Ebenezer Church could stay, under the Government's new "Development Plan" for the area - they could stay on 20 feet of land!

But the Basic School (begun in early December, with KSAC approval) must go. Mr. Hill is alleged to have said that the only way it would not go is if he lost his Ministry.

Church officials were told that a new Basic School would be built in the area - presumably with Government money and for the constituents of Tivoli Gardens, who are nearly all JLP.

No mention was made of the work Operation Friendship has been doing for eight years in the area, while everyone else was talking about doing something. No offer has been made to integrate the Operation Friendship volunteers into future efforts - except, of course, on Government terms. (See background story on Page 3)

So Operation Friendship, the people it has been helping on a non-party basis, and ABENG, wait for the PWD bulldozers to come in early one morning and "mash-up" eight years of hard, selfless work.

WHO DECIDES "COMMUNITY INTERESTS"?

Home Affairs Minister Roy McNeill, who presides over the committee trying to decide how to cut up the Corporate Area for the proposed elections, has suggested that "community interests" should decide just how the electoral divisions are made.

ABENG wonders who will decide on what are the "interests" of a particular community.

The community? Or, as usually happens, will these bunch of men (JLP and PNP) sitting in their air-conditioned council chamber simply tell the community what is good for them. And then proceed to cut up the pie accordingly.

Duffus Report

cause ruckus

ASHENHEIM, Leader of Senate No-Nonsense, made the complaint last week about the Mafesanti Enquiry being a "great waste of time and money". The Business Leader (in and out of Senate) makes it clear for all to see that the only reason Government consented to having an Enquiry at all was because "unpleasant things were being said about Ministers".

And Duffus's Report now provokes still more unpleasant things, Ashenheim claims. Duffus didn't really understand that his job was merely to clear the reputations of Cabinet Ministers. So the Government is grousing all over the place that the Chief Justice failed to fulfil his function properly. Unpleasant findings make the Government say unpleasant things about the highest judicial officer in the land.

Maybe that is Duffus's fault. Like most of the members of the Judiciary, he is the product of the colonial past. The colonial legal service has never been known for the quality of the judges it produced, largely because the lawyers in it performed as faithful cogs in the machinery of colonial domination.

These men played no dynamic function in developing the concept and substance of human freedom. Preoccupied as they all were in the maintenance of existing colonial order, they became subservient to those men who had the direct responsibility for enforcing political decisions on an oppressed people.

Her Majesty's "chickens" getting a new home in Sir Neville's "roost" taking a lot of blows these days.

**BUY
ABENG
EVERY
WEEK
6d**

ABENG IS HERE

WATCH OUT NEXT WEEK FOR - WHY WE ARE DISPOSSESSED! - UNEMPLOYMENT - THE FACTS - AND MUCH MORE

IN THREE YEARS "ABENG" MUST BLOW DAILY!



VOL. I, NO. 1

FEBRUARY 1

1969

BREAD, WORK AND HUMAN DIGNITY

THE CRY FOR BREAD, WORK AND HUMAN DIGNITY — 30 YEARS AFTER THE REVOLT OF 1938 — STILL GOES UNANSWERED IN JAMAICA. Thirty years later, dispossession is still the lot of the vast majority of our Jamaican people. But this is precisely what 1938 set out to end, once and for all. At bottom, it was to be more than the vote for every adult and eventual Nationhood to Jamaica. These were only the means. The end was to be a new way of life for our people. On the evidence, the basic social and economic organization which alone could have achieved this new life has either not been attempted, or what little has been attempted now stands corrupted and decayed.

This is the root of the crisis which confronts this country, and is today shaking the very foundations of social order. The society, as presently organized, seems only able to meet the crisis with the suppression of popular demands and basic freedoms and the craven handouts of loans from abroad. What is equally clear is that the striving of the people cannot be suppressed forever.

In spite of the formidable problem of making these changes, everywhere our people daily show signs of their readiness. It will demand an even greater mobilization of popular energies to get this gigantic effort started.

Basically this is what this NEWSPAPER is about. A new kind of newspaper is an absolute necessity. The narrow divisions on party lines which frustrates the really important task of mobilizing our society must be overcome. It is now time once again

else has failed.

The chief concern of this NEWSPAPER will be to ensure the widest possible participation of ideas coming from the people. To make sure that this is achieved, Editorial Committees working at the Parish and village level will form the backbone of its investigations and reporting. These Committees located across the length and breadth of this country will alone guarantee that the NEWSPAPER is truly the voice of the whole population, a forum for the points of view of all groups, and an organ independent of existing political parties and commercial interests.

The Editorial Committees will make it possible for the NEWSPAPER to recognize and record all the attempts which our people are making daily to break out of the continuing oppressive system of colonial control of our resources: land, labour, and capital resources. These attempts are the stifled renewal of a people embarking on the task once more of building the new society for all. It follows then that news will be reported which at present is either withheld or not regarded as fit for the public to know about. The real issues which are presently tightly secreted will also be frankly and openly discussed.

Thus the new climate of consciousness abroad in the land will be able to find free and certain expression, and consequently heightened. Definite possibilities for change will emerge and our people will begin to see clearly the shape of the new society which we all are striving to erect. If the pent-up energies for creative, constructive action are to be released.

This NEWSPAPER is to be more than a token of the future. It is itself a dynamic component of the new society, gathering around itself fresh efforts to fashion a free Jamaica.

PRIMARY PURPOSE

The ABENG will be owned, published and printed by The Abeng Publishing Company, registered under the Companies Law.

Our primary purpose is to produce a weekly newspaper and in due course (as increased revenue and sale of shares make possible) a daily newspaper. By establishing The ABENG as a weekly paper now, we are taking the first practical and positive step towards a national press equipped to make a reality of the aims of this venture.

The Company will acquire sufficient equipment to print the paper and to undertake a wide range of job printing which will

the newspaper costs. After the initial stages, it is anticipated to increase substantially. The cost for job printing.

After careful examination, of £25,000 will be needed for working capital. £10,000 is to be £15,000 by subscription. Details will be decided when the

Subscriptions will be invited of the population; so that the intention is to mount full and community level. When the meetings throughout the country initiating the campaign.

OUR

Individuals and groups interested in campaign in their areas are: LISHING CO., 4 Collins Green.

We intend to print news, comment, analysis, on every subject, the economy, crime, etc. matters.

Among our regular contributors: Girvan, Peggy Burrows, Sylvia Beckford, Robert Hill, Trevor Kins.

In addition to news, comment, articles on "Where We Can Go" urban development, reform of

The present 4 page weekly weekly by June after acquiring special subscriptions.

After that the target is a 2 in three years!

ABENG SOUNDS A CALL TO ACTION

THE ABENG CALLS INTO QUESTION that system which has been fixed not for us but for a minority of owners. It has been fixed by people whose primary concern is the taking of wealth from this country.

In the past, a few newspapers have come out challenging this domination and it is with this heritage in mind that we appear.

We also share much in common with those Jamaican singers of today — singers whose statements about the society ring true. Their statements become electioneering slogans but are never examined for their true value. The most powerful medium, which has not been fully utilized, is the Sound System. Here the artiste relates to his life in the same way he speaks and with a depth which cannot be arrived at in translation into Standard English. The Abeng in order to be meaningful realises that as a literary medium it has to join forces with the rich oral tradition on which the Sound System is based.

C. L. R. James writing about the press in the West Indies says it must

"give the whole population a different view of society as a whole from that which it has to take and has taken for decades — a newspapers conveys above all an attitude, not only to politics but to all aspects of social life at home and abroad."

TREMENDOUS TASK

The fulfilment of these two principles is a tremendous task when we consider the history of the press in Jamaica. The press has so far been dominated by wealth. First, by the planters, and secondly by businessmen, for whom a newspaper is another commercial undertaking. However, men like Edward Jordan, Robert Love and Marcus Garvey have used the newspaper to influence many aspects of life in Jamaica. What their newspapers have in common is an unrelenting fight against

racial and colour discrimination. This issue had been smothered by the other newspapers.

As editor of the Watchman, Edward Jordan waged a battle for the political rights of coloured people which earned for him a prison term. Robert Love published the Jamaica Advocate which came out on behalf of the black man. This influenced Marcus Garvey into giving up his job as a printer to publish a little paper called The Blackman.

Marcus Garvey has been the most important publisher and



MARCUS GARVEY

editor in our history. He found two newspapers, the Black Man (1929) and the New Jamaican (1932) which engaged contemporary colonial publications and the colonial system in a duel which we must resume. For it is that same system which is being administered today. Garvey's voice, had a direct influence on the agitation of the later thirties and on subsequent newspapers like Plain Talk, the early Public Opinion and the National Negro Voice — all of which were

started in the nineteen-thirties.

When we see what the Press now defends in Jamaica we cannot help but recognise its patched-up colonial outlook. It is involved in double-cross if we are to believe the story of Jamaica's independence. For we do not see our aspirations or problems being frankly examined. The press is now buttressing a decrepit system. In fulfilling this political role whenever a new idea comes forward to challenge the outworn ideas of THE BOSS, it is whipped into obscurity on purpose, ignored or ridiculed. Otherwise, red herrings are dragged into whatever little discussion is permitted.

PROBLEMS IGNORED

This has gone on for too long. Garvey departed from this newspaper tradition which looked outward and ignored the problems facing us. In the first edition of the Black Man, Saturday March 30, he wrote:

"From a long period of little or no activity we arise again with determination to place ourselves in politics and commerce, in arts and science. WE WANT OUR PEOPLE TO THINK FOR THEMSELVES. Just here we must begin. Nobody can do our thinking for us. Other peoples think for us and we work for them. We are exploited. This must cease. Let us pause and assimilate this. Let us think for ourselves and work for ourselves. In no other way can we be self-respecting and respected."

NEW DAY ARRIVED

"A new day has arrived for our people in Jamaica, in the West Indies, in West Africa, in every place where we dwell by ourselves or with other communities. No longer do we mourn in sorrow, the grave is empty and we have arisen to a new life. Forgetting things behind, one thing we do, we press forward to our place of honour and dignity among the nations regardless of what others think."

SUFFERERS' DIARY

"THE COPS COME ON, ADVANCING AS IF THEY WERE ABOUT TO ATTACK"

I was born on the 9th of March 1933, at Montego Bay. I was schooled at the Mt. Lion Government Elementary School. On leaving school I wanted to learn trade at former Rose Hall Sugar Factory where I spent 7 years until it was thrown up in 1960.

From there I went on to work at Appleton, Bybrook and Frome Sugar Factories as a welder.

I got the knowledge that the government of Jamaica are selecting men for employment at the U.S. Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. I made applications until I was called upon to take interview and medical test and was successful in passing everything to their satisfaction so I was selected.

On the 22nd April 1966, I got telegram to report to the Ministry of Labour on the 26th of the said month for departure but never left until the 28th to take up my job.

I signed a contract for 4 months where upon I am entitled to 10 days vacation leave. Instead I did 8 months straight and came out December 21 of the said year for a longer vacation leave plus 10 days sick leave and returned to take up duty in February 1967 where upon I must say everything was going calm and steady as usual.

On the 10th of April 1967, I was on my job at the Ships Repairs Department and it was 10 o'clock that morning when my boss came to me and says the Cops need me.

I orderly went to them and they in turn says they send us for you.

I ask, what for? The cops reply, come on, advancing as if they were about to attack me.

but I was keeping a good head and took every order given.

They took me to my barracks and told me to pack up. I told them I had no suitcase as my friend borrowed mine to go on leave and is expected to come back today. That said day, they reprimand me so I asked them to take me to the Navy Exchange shop to buy one and packed my belongings or please check Richard Dobson giving his location for my suitcase and they refused both.

I says I am going to leave them, they reply we will throw them in the sea, at that same time one Jamaican police started to pack my things in a bedspread. They took me and the bundle to the Police Department leaving many of my own things behind. The police hand me over to the prison surgeon. He searched my person and locked me up 1.30 o'clock in darkness. On the 11th I was released 12.30 o'clock, then straight to a covered metal van. Feels as if coming out of a oven, where they locked me in and took me to the airport for deportation.

I was locked up in that van for 1 hour in the hottest sun until the plane was ready they lashed the van up and ordered me out where I walk from the van to the plane.

On reaching Jamaica the Ministry of Labour received me and took statement, and I can't get any reply that is good after writing several letters to them.

I wrote the American Embassy to get the reason or reasons of such desperate move and they answer me not.

BYRON K. LEE

ishing a wide circulation in the that advertising revenue will pay will offer competitive rates

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UTURE

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and analysis, we will run feature om Here" - plans for rural and e civil service, legal reform etc.

a start to move up to a 12 page in own press with popular finan-

LY. The ABENG must blow daily

OPERATION FRIENDSHIP THREATENED

OPERATION FRIENDSHIP will soon be no more - at least if the Government has anything to do with the matter.

The Ebenezer Church land, on which the organisation conducts most of its work, has been declared part of a Housing Area. Its buildings are slated for demolition.

Up until Press Time, no alternative arrangements had been made by the Government for Operation Friendship. Thus a great voluntary effort which has brought medical care, education and skills to thousands who had none of these, is going - to be replaced by what? A housing scheme whose tenants, like those of the other schemes in the area, will be handpicked by the Housing Officers.

Abeng has it from reliable sources that Operation Friendship was approached about three months ago by a member of the West Kingston Trust. (This is a body set up by the Minister of Welfare to stimulate and manage contributions from the business community to West Kingston.) Would O.F. consider handing itself over to the trust? The officer asked. The answer was a firm NO.

On January 9 an order from the Ministry of Housing appear-

ed in the Jamaica Gazette; it declared the area in which Operation Friendship is situated a Housing Area.

Starting as little more than an idea eight years ago, Operation Friendship has grown into a highly effective venture, offering medical, educational and vocational assistance to thousands of Jamaicans who had never been shown such interest before. The Operation has been made possible by contributions of money and skilled help from Jamaican and overseas sources.

Its medical, dental and family planning clinics treat 200 persons weekly. Doctors and nurses give their services free.

WAITING LIST

Its day nursery cares for 50 children, and has a waiting list of 40 more.

Adult literacy classes have an enrolment of 400, Youth Clubs a membership of 100, and the O.F. Basic School is attended by 225 children. There is also a Household Training Centre.

On Industrial Terrace is a Trade Training Centre at which 30 boys learn lathework, fitting, welding and sheet-metal work. It is now being expanded to include auto-mechanics and electrical installation.

The school's total operating and building costs come to over £11,000; provided largely by the Kingston Rotary Club and Ox-fam, an English organisation, as well as youth clubs in England.

On Ebenezer church land, a new basic school is under construction, at a cost of £4,000, and a new clinic is soon to be built.

No doubt the Government, in their wisdom, will demolish the

FRIENDSHIP

FROM 'ABENG' WEST KINGSTON BUREAU



Children learn at Basic School (Operation Friendship)

basic school and prevent the building of the clinic. Because there is obviously a feeling in Government circles, as shown by their arbitrary action on the matter of Operation Friendship, that no one shall conduct any activity to benefit the people of a depressed area other than the Government.

came into office, the annual subsidy of £2,000 to Operation Friendship from the Ministry of Social Welfare and Development (Inherited by Mr. Edward Seaga, M.P. for Western Kingston) was immediately suspended.

Obviously there is no place for social work in the area unless, under the control of the Government established West Kingston Trust.

There seems no other logical reason for the treatment meted out to O.F. If it is land that is needed, why not use May Pen Cemetery? A Government Junior Secondary School is already under construction on May Pen Cemetery land.

WHO DECIDED?

With what is the Government going to replace these voluntary organisations?

'Who decided that the land should be declared a Housing Area?

Remember the bulldozed land on Marcus Garvey Drive?

Were it not for the same churches who organised Operation Friendship, most of the people in that area would not have found a place to live. The Government made no alternative plans for them.

NEGOTIATIONS

Early in December the Methodist Church (who own Ebenezer Church land, through Operation Friendship is a joint venture of all the Churches) received a letter from the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Housing, offering to negotiate for the land. No mention was made of the purpose for which the Ministry wanted the land. The Rev. Atherton Didier, Chairman of Operation Friendship, pointed out in reply two weeks later that the cemetery adjoining had been cleared for the construction of a basic school and clinic. He did not, it is understood, close the door on negotiations.

But a month later the Housing Area order appeared anyway.

What is the meaning of all this? Why this abrupt treatment of Operation Friendship, and the absence of alternative plans?

Is this part of a pattern? Back in 1962, when the JLP



Free Dental Care at the Friendship Clinic

YOUTHS SUFFER FROM MANDATORY SENTENCES

An alarming situation is developing in the Courts of the land with potentially dangerous effects for the whole society. This situation has been taking a heavy toll both against the young offenders as well as against the entire system of justice in Jamaica.

In the first three weeks of 1969 there were 11 cases in which accused persons were found guilty of criminal offences in the Circuit Courts. Five were cases of robbery with aggravation. Two of the accused were young men of 17 and 20 years with no previous convictions. Each were sentenced to seven years in prison and flogging.

In another case, a young man of 21 years with three previous convictions was sentenced to 15 years and 10 lashes. Putting it another way, the Judge decided to shut that man away until 1984 when he will be 36 years old.

What has brought about this brutal situation? In 1963 the Government and Legislature decided that minimum sentences of 5 years with flogging should be made compulsory for crimes of robbery. The Government's justification for this legislation was that the harshness of the sentence would prevent any wrong-doers in the future.

The statistics reveal that these brutal sentences have not had their intended effect. In fact, the number of instances of robbery have increased!

The situation of these minimum sentences also exists because the legal profession and

the Judges have failed to stand up to the Government. They have remained silent in the face of expert scientific opinion on this matter.

More than 4 years in a prison inflicts permanent damage on the personality of a young man, making it impossible for him to live a responsible social life later on when he gets out of prison.

The lawyers and Judges have also not pointed out to the public other important facts. Modern investigators of the causes of crime recognise that crimes like robbery have deep roots in social and economic conditions and psychological responses. Thus punishment should attempt to reform the offender and the causes that drive him to crime.

POWER REMOVED

Instead of standing up for what they know to be right, the legal profession has allowed the Government to pass laws which take away the discretionary power of the judge to treat each case before him on its merits, and in the light of what is best for the individual offender and the society. The Government has been allowed to put binding restrictions on judges by enacting

the minimum punishment which must be handed down for crimes of robbery.

Martin Luther King once said that there are times when silence is no option. It is certainly no option with respect to these minimum sentences, since most of the offences for which they are imposed result directly from the social and economic realities of slum-dwelling in so many Jamaican towns.

Most of the offenders are young men who have no skills and therefore no steady and dignified means of work. Many of them have never been to prison before. Few of them can afford a lawyer.

Very soon these youths must inevitably begin to doubt the moral pretensions of a society and its legal system which turn a blind eye to robbery in high places but commands the jailer to whip and imprison Quashie.

Double standards of justice in the midst of economic starvation have already produced high feelings among the barefooted people of Jamaica.

It happened not so long ago. The target for attack was the Morant Bay Court House.

PEOPLE STILL REMEMBER THE ABENG

As late as 1956, it was reported by one writer that "The Abeng (or abete) is still blown in Westmoreland as a summons when there is some communal job to be done." (Minister living

"Before we had radio and all these fancy things, the horn was used to tell banana growers when the banana boat would reach, when buying would begin, and so we knew when to start to cut." (Middle-aged banana farmer in St. Mary).

"Man, I remember this plantation with some overseas owner with an attorney in Kingston. Anytime the attorney arrive when we dont expect him and busba out in the field, we would blow a special sound on the horn and busba would know right away him must come to the house." (Old small farmer in Portland).

FROM NOW ON EVERYBODY WILL REMEMBER. FOR WHEN EACH OF YOU ANSWER THE CALL TO SUPPORT THIS NEWSPAPER, "ABENG" WILL BLOW FOREVER THROUGH THE LENGTH AND BREADTH OF THIS COUNTRY.

MASSA DAY DONE?

Mr. L. H. Shearer goes to Trinidad after much hesitancy on the Government's part to attend a Caribbean Summit. Mr. Shearer's ducking of Caribbean Affairs now makes him a most unreliable partner in West Indian co-operation.

For the longest while, Prime Minister Williams of Trinidad has been trying to convene a Commonwealth Caribbean Summit to discuss urgent Caribbean business — Regional Development Bank and the University.

However everyone of the Prime Ministers involved found time to go to London at Wilson's beckoning to discuss Wilson's business. And Wilson didn't even listen to their views.

On Rhodesia, he listened to all the blacks but did not accept their recommendations. He will continue as he pleases.

On Biafra, he didn't even allow them to speak. Why? Because he would be unable to reconcile his support for "rebel" Smith with his support for "legitimate" Federal Nigerian Government.

Who say "massa day done".

"STRANGERS" IN MOBAY

On Thursday night last, it came to pass that a high official of the BITU, Parnell Charles, was denied service at the Beach View Hotel in Montego Bay. This was the second incident of access denied to Jamaicans in MoBay since the new year began.

On New Year's Eve night some Jamaican males were barred from Verney House. They were "strangers," the term which the manager used to justify their debarment. Since when have black Jamaicans become "strangers" in the land of their birth, and white foreigners become relatives?

Parnell Charles is a well-known favourite of the Prime Minister, as well as a person of some consequence in our national life. But maybe this doesn't mean anything in MoBay when you are black all over, as Mr. Charles so conspicuously happens to be. The Manager of the Beach View Hotel armed himself with a reason of some significance "Security". No local people in his hotel after 7 o'clock at night! MoBay is obviously not a safe place these days for the Tourist Great Houses.

ABENG is quite confident that the next step will be the appearance of signs.

[contd. from page 1]

who gets it is an honour. What work has Mr. Shearer done to qualify? What examination did he pass to qualify? We do not know of any requirements to qualify as a Privy Councillor. If there are any they must be privy to the Queen. And since she alone knows, it must be an honour.

We are not persuaded by the argument that because it involves duties it is not an honour. That is pure eyewash. What duties? The Queen's Privy Council has 300 persons today. But "when a meeting of the Council takes place, only those Privy Councillors who are summoned attend, the quorum being three... being the Ministers concerned with the matter which is to be dealt with." Three out of 300! When will Mr. Shearer be one of the three? According to the above, only when the matter concerns Jamaica (or perhaps other Commonwealth Caribbean territories like Anguilla). But, in that event, the Queen or the British Government would have to consult Jamaica's Prime Minister anyway. So there are really no special duties attached to the honour.

BACKWARD SYSTEM

Our backward and colonial legal system provides for appeals to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council although we have a Constitution and Britain does not. (But that is another scandal). The point is that some people claim that because of that, Mr. Shearer had a right to accept the honour. Mr. Shearer is not a lawyer and, therefore cannot sit on that Privy Council Committee. Interestingly, the Guyanese Prime Minister Mr. Burnham, who is a barrister-at-law, refused the same honour Mr. Shearer accepted at the same time that it was offered the Jamaican Prime Minister. In refusing, Mr. Burnham the lawyer said that "he only believes in professional honours like Queen's Council which he already holds as a barrister". Mr. Shearer, who is not a lawyer accepted the honour we are told, to perform some duty. What duty we ask? More precisely, what Jamaican duty? Jamaica wants to know from the "Right Honourable" Mr. Shearer.

P.S. We sincerely hope that our Prime Minister does not have personal ambitions to migrate permanently (like "Lord Constantine" of Trinidad) to the United Kingdom.

THE HOUSE SLAVE

"Deep in the history of the West Indies is the role of the house-slave. While the majority of his fellows sweated in the fields he wielded a whip as overseer. His wife and daughter (if comely) cooked or washed (or rendered other valuable services) for the white plantation owner. Revolt after revolt of the slaves (the most rebellious social group history has known), rebellion after rebellion, was defeated or smothered owing to treachery by the house-slaves. They flourished on their scraps and dribbles. No one could have foreseen that in time they would become rulers of the territories. But house-slaves they were and house-slaves they have remained. They foresee an infinity of house-slavery. But the Caribbean breed is faced with extinction. The breed cannot overcome a deadly insecticide. It is called democracy.

"Faced with a national community, the foreign power gives way. It is only when they find house-slaves that the blood flows."

C. L. R. JAMES.
—Patriarch of living West Indian Writers.

RHODESIA

WHAT JAMAICA CAN DO

by Omo Ogun

There are many battles being fought in Africa today. Some of them are against foreign rulers, others against new masters who have taken over since independence and are just as bad as the old ones, others against conditions of life like poverty, ignorance and disease. This paper will try regularly to bring you news of one of these battles.

Today let us look at Rhodesia, where a few hundred thousand whites hold millions of blacks in subjection, exploiting their labour and permitting them no real human rights. When Ian Smith, the leader of the white minority, declared Rhodesia to be independent from Britain in November 1965, it was the responsibility of Harold Wilson, Britain's Prime Minister, to do something about this. But Wilson would not take military action; he only imposed economic sanctions against Rhodesia's trade. These have not worked, since Smith has been helped by South Africa and business interests in countries like Japan and France. Now Wilson would like to reach a negotiated settlement with Smith; having sold out Socialism in Britain, he seems ready to sell out the black man in Rhodesia.

A Commonwealth Prime Min-

isters' Conference has just been held in London, at which the Rhodesian question was discussed. Wilson was strongly criticised by some of the delegates for negotiating with Smith; one of the critics was Mr. Shearer, Prime Minister of Jamaica. This sounds very fine, as does his assurance of Jamaican sanctions against Rhodesia! But all such declarations are just words. What was said at the Conference will not affect Wilson's policy of sell-out; it was just a way of letting off steam by talking tough. The true picture was given by the report from London which pointed out that the "more recent members" of the Commonwealth (like Jamaica) showed "an increased willingness to come to terms with realities of international politics". What that really means is that they have learned to talk plenty and do little!

Fortunately the real answer to Smith and Wilson is not in the hands of the Commonwealth leaders (among whom Kaunda of Zambia and Nyerere of Tanzania are honourable exceptions). The answer is in the hands of the black people of Rhodesia whose sons and brothers are now fighting a guerrilla war against Smith's troops and police. It is this which in the end will bring down his regime. If Mr. Shearer really wishes to see majority rule in Rhodesia he should stop talking and start sending money, arms, and any other necessary help to the black freedom fighters there.

ANOTHER SUGAR REPORT?

We gather that the Sugar Advisory Council has sent in a report to Johnny Gyles on aspects of the report of the Mordecai Commission on Sugar.

With the Government's fondness for setting up (and ignoring the reports of) commissions and councils, ABENG wonders whether in the near future, they won't set up a council to study the report of the Sugar Advisory Council on the Mordecai Report.

DIFFICULT YEAR—FOR WHO?

1968, WE GATHER from the Chairman of the Board, was a difficult year for Jamaica Omnibus Services Ltd. Their operating costs went up, and their profits went down.

There was no one at the meeting to point out to this gentleman that 1958 was also a difficult year for the bus-using public. Our operating costs went up too, by anything up to 8d a day. And it goes without saying that, with the numerous bus strikes, our profits took a head-dive as well.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS TO LAUNCH "ABENG"

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30:

- 1. New World Theatre, — 8.00 p.m.
- 2. Scouts Headquarters 7.30 p.m.
- 3. Montego Bay

FRIDAY, JANUARY 31:

- 1. Port Antonio 7.00 p.m.
- 2. Morant Bay 7.00 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1:

- 1. Sav-la-mar 7.30 p.m.
- 2. Falmouth 6.30 p.m.
- 3. Brown's Town 7.30 p.m.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3:

- 1. Spanish Town 6.30 p.m.
- 2. May Pen 7.00 p.m.

WHY

ALL THE FUSS

ABOUT SOBERS?

by Foggy Burrowes

I cannot understand the critics of Gary Sobers. Here is the cow who has given most milk down the years and because the liquid is no longer flowing abundantly his owners are regretting ever having bought him.

The W.I. became world champions when they defeated Australia under the captaincy of Sobers in '65. We kept this position against England in '66 largely because Sobers averaged over 100 with the bat; also because he made it clear for all who were still stupid enough to doubt that he was and is the greatest cricketer the world has seen.

The fact is that Sobers' captaincy has not changed since '65. We won in England because he was performing superbly, not because he was captaining astutely. We won because he stayed in the middle long enough to average over 100 as he did in India '67 and also against England here last year. He did not spend a lot of time at the nets in '65 neither was he often with the team off the field. I go further, and this will surprise many — Worrell spent as little time with the team in '63 as Sobers did in '66 and is now doing in Australia.

We cannot now complain that Sobers has got too big. He has for a long time been the biggest. This consciousness of his "size" is mainly responsible for his greatest achievements. Let us not ask him to forget to deny or to be unaware of his greatness. Let us hope rather that he will speedily regain his cunning, his guile, his consummate skill and that the rest of the team will also perform to the best of their ability.

And yet we must all realize

that this is more a hope than an expectation. Australia were World Champions with Miller and Lindwall. England with Trueman, Statham, Tyson and West Indies with Hall and Griffith. Our pace bowlers are no longer what they used to be, hence we can hardly expect to remain world champions.

Finally and most important... give credit to Sobers when we win — blame him or lament with him when we lose, but don't be petty. Do not suddenly realize that he should never have been captain or that he is conceited. Those great moments you remember were possible because as captain he felt compelled to perform above the ordinary, and because he was conceited enough to think himself capable of doing it. When Nat King Cole sings "Mona Lisa" I appreciate and enjoy it; I never stop to think that he could never have starred in "Student Prince".

So Gary I thank you for the major role you played in making the West Indies world champions. The joy though temporary was sweet. Thanks too for being the greatest cricketer the world has ever seen. It makes me proud to be a West Indian.



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